

the remarks of Dr. Leland, praising his attitude, and, with him, condemning the police judges. One of Dr. Leland's statements, quoted by the *Chronicle*, is: "The Police Courts do not attack in this way those who perform criminal operations with the worst of motives." No one will dispute that fact, nor will he fail to recognize the fact that the abortionist, the performer of "criminal operations for the worst of motives," is one of the hardest of criminals to convict, largely because he generally has plenty of "influence." Part, at least, of his influence is derived from the support which he receives from the daily press, and incidentally the very daily paper which editorially condemns the police courts for not doing their duty! The same issue of the *Chronicle* contains, of course on another page, the following choice morsels for the delectation of the mothers and daughters and sisters in the homes which it enters: "Ladies who are in trouble or suffering from irregularities or suppressions. . . I positively guarantee immediate relief from irregularities from whatever cause. . . Dr. White." "Ladies suffering from irregularities. . . Immediate relief from irregularities from whatever cause. . . Dr. Sylvester." (We are advised that this man holds a license to practice, under another name.) And so on, for nearly half a column!

The great value of having a card record or index of every physician in the state needs no explanation. It is practically an absolute essential to the proper publication of the annual Register and Directory of Physicians. Also, it is necessary in order to keep track of the physicians of the state as they move from place to place. It is gratifying to report that the vast majority of the members of the Society and physicians of the state generally seem to appreciate this fact, and have promptly sent back to us the blank cards which have been mailed to them from this office. Some few, however, do not seem to apprehend that this is a matter of sober, serious business, and have been so childish as to make trivial, pert or impudent comments on their cards, or have failed to give the information desired. The Publication Committee is considering the advisability of publishing such comments in the Register, though a decision has not yet been reached. If you have received your card and have not yet returned it, please do so AT ONCE; if you have not received a card, please advise us AT ONCE. If you have any criticism, comment or philosophical dissertation to make, please make it in a letter and not on the card. The Publication Committee will most emphatically NOT be responsible for any errors or omissions in the Register unless the correct information is on file on the regular form card, in this office.

Some time ago a member of the Society living in the southern part of the state was victimized by a man who purported to be an agent of P. Blakiston's Son & Co., medical book publishers. He took an order for Da Costa's blood examination, filled out a receipt on a regular blank of the publishing house, received \$5.00 for which he receipted on the blank, and departed. Time went by and no book having been received, the doctor wrote to the house to know why. In reply they wrote: "Sam Wright does not work for us, and has never been employed directly by us; he was employed at one time by a man who was manager of our subscription department; afterward, he worked for Knight & Brown of New York City; we think at present he is engaged with Edward Bronson, San Francisco. While these people all handle our books, we are not responsible for the actions of their agents." It certainly seems a rather peculiar thing to deny all responsibility for the acts of a man though employed not by the house, but by the manager of the subscription department of the house! There is apparently some subtle distinction to be drawn which is not apparent to the ordinary individual. However, the lesson is plain; do not pay money to anyone representing himself to be connected with the house of P. Blakiston's Son & Co.

The Board of Examiners has announced that it will no longer undertake the work of prosecuting illegal practitioners, and it becomes the duty of county medical societies to take up that task. The board will direct its energies, in future, to seeing that the letter of the law is followed and lived up to in the matter of credentials. Just before the last examination the credentials committee of the board discovered that almost if not all the medical schools in California had issued diplomas to one or more students who had not remained in school the requisite time—not less than six months in each of four separate years. Doubtless in all these cases the error was one of oversight and not one of direct intentional commission; yet the law was not complied with. In one instance (the Hahnemann Medical College) a complication of this sort arose through the change in date of the commencement of the annual course. Up to October, 1903, the course began in May and ended in October; that year it was changed to conform with most other schools, beginning in October and ending in June. The step was taken only after advice with the New York State University Regents and the Illinois State Board of Health. Unfortunately, the first course under the new time schedule ended in June, 1904, instead of running to July, so that all of the students (with one or two exceptions) are affected. The law requires that four courses of not less

than six months each in four separate years shall have been taken before a diploma, which is a requisite credential for admission to the examination before the board, may be issued.

The term of study of all but one of the graduates of the Hahnemann Medical College, ending in June of the present year, was a few weeks short of the legally required time. When this matter was presented by the credentials committee of the Board of Examiners to the dean of that school, he at once saw the desirability of maintaining the integrity of the law. All of the students of that institution to whom diplomas have been granted for this last term will be required to re-enter the school in October and study till December, when they will be granted new diplomas, and will be eligible to appear before the Board of Examiners at the succeeding examination. There was no plea for leniency; no request that the law be ignored "just this one time"; no desire to evade the issue. The decision was immediate and clean-cut; the law should be lived up to. We are certainly to be congratulated upon this wise decision, for it leaves no ground for complaint by any school at any time that in any single instance the medical practice act was ignored or set aside. The other medical schools in which individual instances of a somewhat too short term of study have occurred can but follow the example which they have been set without grumbling, and live up to the wise letter of the wise law.

Dr. Oliver T. Osborne, Chairman of the Section of Materia Medica, etc., of the A. M. A., made the subject of his address at the Atlantic City meeting a discussion of nostrums and unlicensed or illegal practitioners.

It was an excellent address, and was published in the *Journal A. M. A.*, July 2, 1904. That of it which had to do with nostrums was entirely devoted to the, popularly called, "patent medicines," and ignored the most dangerous class—the nostrums vended through the physicians of the country—the secret-formula "proprietary" preparations. Elsewhere in the JOURNAL will be found an extract from *Printers' Ink*, a publication devoted to advertisers and their interests. Read it carefully and then stop and think whether you are being "worked" in this way. Think whether you are doing all of your duty, or whether you are lazily going through life prescribing "ready-to-take-medicine" in the original package. The same number of the *Journal A. M. A.* which reprinted a portion of the article from *Printers' Ink*, contained, among other advertisements, some of them irreproachable, the following choice collection; it may be that the composition of some of the stuff here presented for the consideration and

use of reputable physicians, is known; if so, we should like to know it: Listerine, Colden's Liquid Beef Tonic, Iodomuth (seems to be good for most everything), Urasol, Thigenol, Vasogen, Lactagol, Gonosan, Mey's Poultrice, Diouviburnia, Neurosine, Ergoapiol, Bovinine (advertised on fences, billboards, lay press, etc., etc.), Sal Hepatica, Unguentine (at first glance this "ad." looks like the announcement of a fire engine manufacturer), Tongaline, Uriseptine (the Gardner-Barada Co.'s fake-formula stuff), Chiolin, Cactina, Seng and, choicest morsel of all, Bartlett's Pile Suppositories," sent to anyone anywhere for \$1.00 per box! We miss our old friends, "Fig Syrup" and "Peruna."

The peculiar but not unique case of Jane Toppan, the Boston nurse who, in 1902, was arrested for the murder of a number of patients under her charge, is carefully analyzed in a recent number of the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*. A very decidedly praiseworthy detail in the proceedings against this individual was the agreement of the prosecution and the defense to the appointment of a commission of three experts, who examined and passed upon the mental condition of the prisoner with reference to her responsibility. "A more practical and satisfactory method, and one more in keeping with the principles of scientific inquiry, could not have been chosen, and its adoption by the attorney-general in such an important case would seem to be a long step toward abolishing, in criminal cases at least, the opposite customary practice which has done so much to discredit expert opinion." The JOURNAL most emphatically endorses the words of Dr. Stedman, who prepared the report in question, and commends them to the careful consideration of all the members of our Society. Can we not use our influence to secure similar action in criminal cases, and thus remove somewhat of the reproach which now attaches to "expert testimony"?

The Lane Lectures, at Cooper College, were delivered this year by Dr. Wm. H. Welch of Johns Hopkins, on the general subject of infection. It would be quite impossible at this time or in the space at present command to attempt to review the course of lectures or in the slightest degree outline their scope and value. Unfortunately, the JOURNAL did not receive notice of the course until too late to publish a statement anent them in the August issue. We hope to be able to publish some of the lectures, or an abstract of the course, in subsequent issues, but at the time of writing nothing definite has been determined and we cannot promise it. Certainly the publication of these lectures would be of very great value to the medical men of California, and to the readers of the JOURNAL generally, and therefore we have hopes.